

The Spirit

April 2018

St. Joseph's College

245 Clinton

Heart of the Bears

By Hailey Borrero

The past school year has been a rollercoaster ride for SJC senior Alec Willis. Despite a series of recent traumatic events, he has held his head up high and maintained a positive outlook. As a starting guard for the Bears this season, Alec averaged 12.9 points per game, while shooting 44% from behind the three-point line and 81% at the free throw stripe.

At the end of December, when the team had two games in Connecticut, Willis began experiencing stomach pains. After a game at Trinity College, Willis couldn't sleep. He stayed up until 5 A.M. trying to figure out what was wrong with him. He decided to not go to the hospital and play the next day between Westfield State. The Bears lost, but Alec played his best game of the season, scoring 27 points.

On Monday morning, New

Year's Day, Alec began to feel the pains again, so his mother Barbara took him to the emergency room at Staten Island University Hospital. He was taken into a sonogram room and soon found out that his left testicle had a large cancerous tumor, covering over 80% of the testicle. Alec was relatively calm during this whole situation, while Barbara was crying.

On January 3, Alec went for a follow-up. Five days later, he went into surgery. Luckily, the doctors successfully removed the tumor. There were no signs of cancer in the rest of his body. Once the doctor gave Alec the okay to play basketball again, Alec went straight to training. Every day after the surgery, he got significantly better. Instead of taking it easy, Alec decided to test his limits. Instead of jogging, he wanted to run.



Next Alec started to play basketball. Initially he felt uncomfortable and scared to make certain moves because he did not want to re-injure his testicles. But by the 16th of January, Alec was practicing with his team again.

On January 24, Alec returned to the court (in the starting lineup) and helped the Bears beat the Mount Saint Vincent Dolphins. At the time the Dolphins were first in the Skyline Conference and were on a winning streak. But Alec was on fire and ended up scoring 27 points. "That was my Senior Night," he says.

The Sunday after St. Patrick's Day, Alec and his family experienced a fire in their home. Alec's siblings were home with Barbara when they smelled smoke, but at first they didn't think anything of it. When Sylvester, Alec's brother, went to check the dryer, it was on fire. Alec was not home when the fire occurred. Fortunately, everyone made it out alive. When the firefighters came, they informed the family that the start of the fire was in the walls.

"I was put into a unique situation. I experienced the situation with cancer first and then the fire," Alec says. "Due to experiencing cancer first, I have a unique appreciation for life. I am in a better position than my family members because they feel they lost everything. I am just happy everyone is okay and alive."

Alec has a 3.8 GPA, is president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), and is a member of the cross country team, volleyball team, and the Chapel Players Theater Group. He is an inspiration to his peers.

Study Abroad with SJC!

By Alessandra Lanno

Have you ever wanted to travel? Are you tired of seeing the same old trips to Europe being offered? You're wondering, "Where's the excitement of visiting different places that aren't usually offered by other colleges?" For all you travel junkies and seekers, SJC is offering unique study abroad programs in the 2018-2019 academic year.

A few places that are currently in the works for studying abroad are Japan, New Zealand, and Ghana. These are countries you probably wouldn't see in a typical abroad study, which is precisely why these were picked.

Professor Damian Duchamp, associate chairperson of the Hospitality and Tourism Management, is one of the main coordinators for the study abroad programs here at SJC. "The reason I chose these places is because anyone can travel to Europe by themselves. Saying that you have been places such as New Zealand, can be a standout feature on a resume." Seriously, who can say they have visited world-renowned international parks in New Zealand and meditation gardens in Japan?

You probably are wondering about paying for trips such as these. As of now, there are roughly estimated at \$2,000. A little steep on the surface, however there are various options one can take to pay for this program. SJC offers a \$500 travel stipend from The Office of the Academic Vice President that can be applied to paying for these trips. These stipends are due by the end of November for trips that occur in the spring semester. Financial Aid also offers grants and loans as well. Be sure to check them out and see if that can be an option for you.

There are also a variety of different scholarships you can apply for online that can go towards paying for this program as well. Some of these include David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship, Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholarships, and the Fulbright Program. Each have their own individual deadlines and fulfillments depending on which trip you take, so pay close attention to dates and exceptions.

For more additional information, check out sjcnj.edu and/or contact Professor Duchamp.

Happy traveling!

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"The Process"

By Veronique Mathieu

Peace, a feeling that starts from within.

It takes hold and I'll always let it win.

I've never felt so calm until I let it begin,

The process, the feel of it setting in.

Submit to God and you'll feel it to,

Whenever you need Him, He's there for you.

He promised peace for all, so call for it.

No need to shout, it's a whisper away,

No need to wait, call for it today.

SJC Fall 2017 - Spring 2018



"The trip to Brentwood this past fall proved to be an exciting opportunity. I worked with a fantastic group of individuals and despite the trouble we were having with the projector, we pushed on. Together we not only got to bond over our shared vision but also got to create a beautiful masterpiece for the kindergarten, which hopefully will be enjoyed for many years to come."

— Sashoy Milton



"Through a wide variety of experiences, students were able to interact with the Sisters and learn what it means to live a life characterized by the 'love of God and love of the dear neighbor without distinction.' We hope this project continues in the coming semesters since it has helped to unite our SJC family."

— Juanita Arias - Student Government Association president, on SJC trip to Brentwood

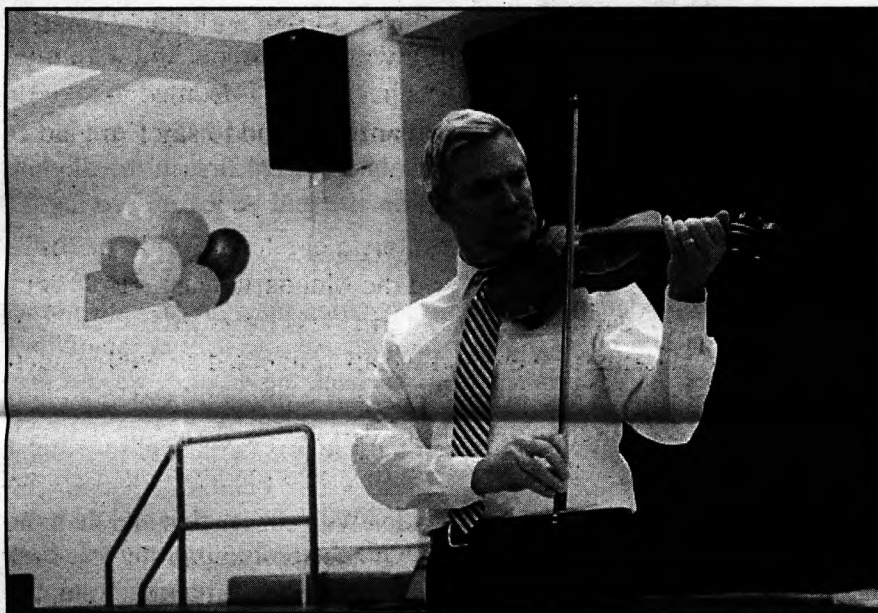


Photo by Urwah Ahmad

President Boomgaarden made an impromptu fiddle performance at the St. Patrick's Day celebration sponsored by the Gaelic Society.



Photo by SGA

3-on-3 was once again a success! Thanks to all the clubs that collaborated and to all the individuals who worked hard in order to raise money for the Taiwan Relief Fund.

— SGA

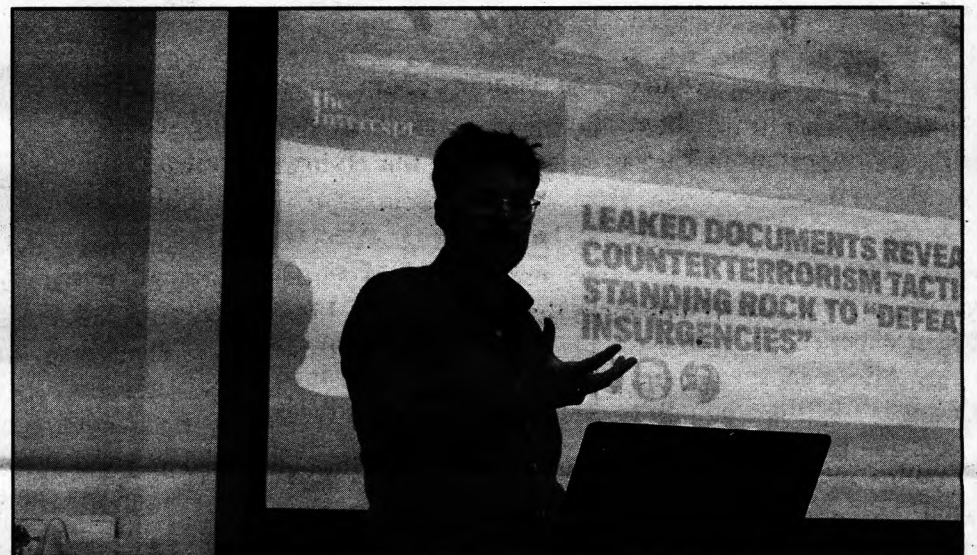
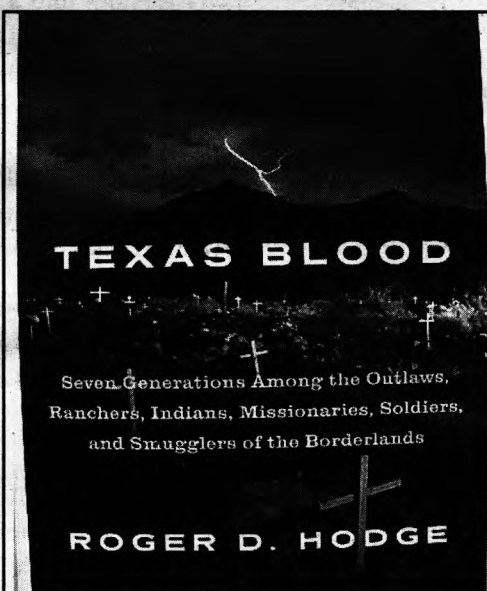


Photo by Daniela Cardinale



Roger Hodge, a Deputy Editor at *The Intercept*, came to discuss his latest book *Texas Blood*, a memoir which recounts his family history. Despite the fact that he wrote about the past, it had quite a bit of relevance to our lives today. Students who attended the event were able to have questions answered regarding his writing and his responsibilities at *The Intercept*.



At his March installation ceremony, Dr. Donald Boomgaarden stated, "The motto *Esse Non Videri* echoes through the centuries with its power. To be not to seem. It is telling us to not just to appear to be educated but to be truly educated. Not just to appear to appear to be kind but to be truly kind. Not just to appear to love our school but to truly love our school."

Taiwan Diaries

By Candice Pollidore-Joseph

Traveling to Taiwan this summer had to be one of the most humbling experiences of my life thus far. What I did during the past month was way more productive than what I would've done for the entire summer. I would only be working and that's basically it. Honestly, it didn't hit me that I was going to Taiwan until we arrived to the dorms. There was no excitement the day before, on the plane or when we landed. I was more nervous than excited. I was homesick as soon as I said goodbye to my family. However, I knew I had to pull it together, I'd be across the world for an entire month. Everyone was warned about the huge culture shock, but I underestimated it big time. We were literally sleeping on wooden beds, the prices for certain things were cheap when you compare it to American currency, the humidity made it hard to breathe sometimes, and the language barrier made it a little difficult to get by. All in all, this trip was an incredible experience, and I am forever grateful that my parents agreed to let me go on the journey.

First off, I'd just like to compliment the country as a whole: it's beautiful! The area in which we stayed was very clean. Recycling seems to be very important in Taiwan, and I admire that. Being in Taiwan reminded me so much of the island in which my family is from, Trinidad. The humidity, the narrow streets, the non existent sidewalks, the beach, the downtown area, and the people! I probably said "this is so much like the Caribbean" to my friends more than a few times. I really appreciate the friendliness, although there was a huge language barrier. People never ceased to wave, smile or help us out.

I just want to say thank you to all of the Tzu Chi University and SJC staff who made this trip for me and my SJC friends possible. I can literally write a book based on all that I experienced in Taiwan. I am so grateful for the classes, the professors, the lessons, the "do it yourself" projects. I expected book reports, and essays but instead I gained lifelong friends, lifelong lessons, souvenirs that I made myself, and memories that will last me a lifetime. If given the opportunity to do the exchange program once more, I think I'd give it another shot. This trip taught me to be accepting, and to love no matter what. I can genuinely say that although I felt homesick quite a lot, my friends from SJC and TCU helped me to feel at home. Most of us had just met, but the unconditional love that we all had for each other made me a happier and better person. We all cared about one another and that's what made me feel better. I am forever grateful to the SJC and TCU students.



By Sahar Rahmani

Brian Tracey once said, "Move out of your comfort zone. You can only grow if you are willing to feel awkward and uncomfortable when you try something new." This statement describes my experiences perfectly. When I first heard about this opportunity my initial thought was "Yeah right, Taiwan is in another continent." I found myself thinking about the trip and how uneasy I felt when I thought about going to another country for an entire month, on my own, away from my family; I had never taken such a big step before. I had always found ease and convenience in my comfort zone and I never really thought to step out of it. After discussing the opportunity with my parents and with my father's support, despite my mother's hesitation, I decided to take this once in a lifetime opportunity. And I am so proud to say I'm glad I did.

My first week in Taiwan was definitely a challenge, with the time difference, the food, the weather, and the Mandarin class. However, during the first few days of our Mandarin class I noticed how nice my Taiwanese classmates were and we all connected so well in such a short amount of time. They made me feel at home and protected and I appreciated them and their friendship very much. The second week I started trying out new things and visiting new places. This included hiking, archery, kayaking, eating street food, visiting the Truku tribe and getting to know them and dance with them, and picking vegetables to cook lunch. I learned that some of the best things happen to us when we decide to explore places we had never planned on visiting.

Living in Hualien for an entire month was a unique opportunity for me to experience the ordinary life in Taiwan. We were able to try the food, do grocery shopping, and visit the local areas. Another thing that I found very intriguing was the similarities between my Afghan and/or South Asian culture and the Taiwanese culture. I noticed that in both cultures people are very kindhearted and their hospitality towards foreigners. Seeing this made me feel at home, it brought back memories of when I was still in Afghanistan.

One of my favorite trips was when we visited the Tzu Chi Hospital. I was at a loss for words when I saw how they treat their patients like family. The way the hospital is set up makes the patients feel at home and respected. For example, the hospital has a dining area with a dining table and a kitchen instead of a cafeteria; the purpose of this is to make the patients feel at home and as comfortable as possible. Another thing I found admirable about the hospital is how they respect all religions.

Overall, I believe that the Tzu Chi Foundation is doing incredible work for the community worldwide. They have built schools, and hospitals all over Taiwan. They also extend their kindness and compassion through helping people all over the world in times of disaster and hopelessness. One of the most amazing and inspiring assets of the foundation is that they help with an open heart and they ask for nothing in return; their intention is to give to those in need. This teaches a lesson about true humanity, it teaches us to always be kind and compassionate to people because what really matters at the end of the day is how you made them feel. I am so grateful and blessed for the fact that I was able to experience a different culture and a different country. I have learned things that I would not have even thought about if I hadn't decided to sign up for the program. It was one of the best decisions of my life.



#NotABrokeCollegeStudent

By Alessandra Lanno

Broke college student — Is this phrase relatable to you? Like most of us, we juggle between binging on 59¢ ramen noodles for dinner or taking #treatyoself just a bit too far. I know, you didn't think last week's paycheck would disappear from your bank account in a flash. However, it is likely to happen a couple of times, which is why you probably didn't know about the benefits of student discounts. Yes, there are perks of being a college student besides making your classes scheduled all for the afternoon. So before you feel guilty for that Instagram worthy picture of your \$16 dollar salad, here are discounts to compensate those moments of weakness.

If you're a music junkie or a daily commuter, Apple Music offers a discounted monthly subscription of \$4.99, 50% off the original \$9.99! You can also download music to listen to offline. A perk to save your data and pass the frustration, or when you suddenly have to travel underground. If you're not a fan of Apple, Spotify offers a discounted monthly subscription at the price of \$4.99. Additionally, for a limited time, this student subscription also includes Hulu. You get two subscriptions for the price of one; a major bonus if you ever wanted to binge watch TV Shows, old or newly added.

Can't get enough of stocking up your jar of Twizzler's and disposable razors on Amazon? Good news, you can probably get those the next day for free with Prime for students. Amazon Prime offers a 50% off originally priced yearly membership. Reducing the price to only \$49.

This subscription includes next day shipping, access to streaming tons of music, and amazon original series/movies. You can finally know what the hype was around *Sneaky Pete*.

Looking to upgrade your spring/summer wardrobe and satisfy your shopaholic urges? There are plenty of discounts from your favorite retailers to go around. Gals will be interested in various online fashion boutiques has to offer including 15% the fashionista Youtuber's obsession, Princess Polly. Others include 45% BooHoo and for a limited time 50% on MissGuided. Not a fan of online shopping? Forever 21 offers an additional 10% for their discounted fast fashion pieces. Want more quality? Urban Outfitters offers 10%, as well as 20% from American Eagle. How about for the guys? If you're typically not a fan of those previous stores mentioned, Express and American Apparel offer 15%, as well as Adidas. Want an online option? ASOS offers 10% off.

Last but certainly not least, food. With a whip of your student ID, you can easily snatch a discount from your local eateries around the SJC campus, including Chipotle and Myrtle Thai. But what if you're in the mood to order something after a vigorous study session? Treat yourself to some Grubhub, which easily offers \$15 dollars off your first meal \$20 dollars or over.

So next time you're stressing as a college student, don't forget the perks!

Where to Binge in Bay Ridge

By Daniela Cardinale

Bay Ridge is a neighborhood that has a little bit of everything. There is something for every taste, including scrumptious cupcakes at Little Cupcake Bakeshop on 91st. Street and 3rd Ave., authentic Korean at Kim Chee on 93rd Street, and some tasty crepes at Crepe Factory on 73rd Street. Recently the culinary tastes have changed in the area to reflect the influx in residents from other areas of New York City and beyond.

Pier 69 Market (located at 10 Bay Ridge Ave.) is within walking distance of the Bay Ridge ferry service and is a commuter's paradise for freshly prepared meals. Perfect for someone who is on the rush to commute to work — the x27/x37 is located on the avenue — or the patron that likes to sit down and enjoy their meal slowly, Pier 69 Market has a great layout accented with warm décor and a menu that caters to the health conscious to the not-very. The Acai Bowl Loaded is a popular breakfast item packed with berries and fruit, the muffins are made fresh daily, sandwiches and wraps (the grilled chicken wrap is a personal favorite and a must try), and the coffee options are all worth a try. A dive where you can't go wrong with anything you try, Pier 69 Market is a must-try for the Bay Ridge local.

Gourmet Fit Kitchen (located at 6819 3rd Ave.), a Brazilian restaurant and grill, credits itself with being one of the first restaurants to introduce the concept of eating healthy at a sit-down restaurant in the neighborhood. It proudly serves USDA certified, steroid-free, hormone-free and free-

range poultry; angus, choice, organic and grass-fed meats; and non GMO produce. With comfortable décor, green and brown accents throughout the restaurant, and a coffee bar at the back to order, Gourmet Fit offers patrons the chance to order to go or eat-in with company comfortably. Offering a brunch and dinner menu, some unique selections include the salmon wrap, the potato casserole, the rice bowl (chicken and shrimp may be added at a cost), shrimp ceviche and passion fruit mousse. Even though the options and prices are subject to change the selection and variety of menu items makes Gourmet Fit Kitchen a definite stop to dine at.

Lastly, Beets and Carrots (located at 9905 3rd Ave.) is a hidden gem of a restaurant. In walking distance of the Verrazano Bridge, this restaurant is unique in it's approach to food as the owner & chef embraces the farm-to-table approach. The layout is unique with books and plants decorated here and there, giving the feeling of "lived in" — fitting as the menu is meant to make you feel more at home with the dishes served. Popularly shared are the pasta dishes — the baby beet & carrots salad with horseradish gnocchi and goat cheese and the roasted chicken are crowd-pleasing dishes that leave your stomach full and hungry for more.

Regardless of where you go, these restaurants are introducing a new wave of cuisine to Bay Ridge. It won't be long before more places follow suit, but with the options seasonal and emphasizing local produce, it's best to pop by these spots before the menus change with the seasons.

RE: Submissions

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